(b) what are the details of improvements to be brought about, especially in respect of comforts and convenience to the public in general and passengers in particular; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that in order to off-load the passenger traffic at Ludhiana Railway Station, nearby station Dhandari Kalan is being upgraded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. On Firozpur division, 7 stations have been selected as model station for the purpose of providing upgraded passenger amenities. The thrust areas identified for the model stations are as under:

(i) Provision of Standardised Signages, National Train Enquiry System and Self Printing Ticket Machines;

(ii) Improvement in Waiting Rooms/Booking Offices, Toilets and in the deficiences of infrastructure facilities/passenger amentities;

(iii) Conversion of stalls into modular stalls and provision of Automatic Vending Machines;

(iv) Improvement of circulating area;

(v) Extention of foot-over bridge upto circulating area; and

(vi) Computerisation of complaints.

(c) Dhandari-Kalan is considered for providing additional facility in connection with provision of additional line from Chandigarh to Ludhiana link. At this station, one additional platform, extension of existing platforms and provision of FOB is being planned. These facilities will come up at the time of construction of the new line.

Hotgi-Bijapur-Gadag Gauge Conversion

1397. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH:
SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey for conversion of Hotgi-Gadag-Bijapur rail line into broad gauge has been conducted;

(b) if so, the estimated cost for conversion of the above line;

(c) the amount, if any, earmarked for the above work during 2000-2001;

(d) whether the above work has been taken up; if so, the latest position of the progress of work; and

(e) by when the above conversion work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Estimated cost of the project is Rs. 286 cr.

(c) Budget outlay for 2000-2001 is Rs. 10 cr.

(d) and (e) The work has been taken up in phases. Work on Solapur-Hotgi and Hotgi-Bijapur sections has been completed and commissioned. Work on the remaining section is presently in progress and will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Railway Bridge Over Ganga

1398. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 198, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 4th August, 2000 and state:

(a) whether the proposal for construction of a railway bridge across River Ganga between Patna and Sonepur has since been processed for requisite clearances;

(b) whether the construction work has also been taken up and the provision of Rs. five crores, made during the current financial year, would be utilised; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in negative, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) The project will be processed for clearances once the final location survey and model studies are completed and the report with firm cost becomes available.

About Rs. 40 lakh will be used during the current year for the survey work now in progress. The rest of the money can be used only if the clearances become available within this financial year.

Cycle/scooter stand contract at Ludhiana Railway Station

1399. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Northern Railway had invited tenders for allotment of cycle/ scooter stand contract at Ludhiana Railway Station this year;

(b) if so, what procedure was adopted in awarding the contract;

(c) whether tender was re-advertised due to non-availability of suitable contractor in the first advertisement;